United Nations A/70/PV.104

General Assembly
Seventieth session

Official Records

104th plenary meeting
Tuesday, 14 June 2016, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Lykketoft ..... (Denmark)

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Announcement regarding the results of the election of the Chairpersons of the Main Committees

The President: I should like to inform members that the following representatives have been elected Chairpersons of the five Main Committees of the General Assembly at its seventy-first session and are accordingly members of the General Committee for that session: First Committee, Mr. Sabri Boukadoum of Algeria; Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee), Mr. Vladimir Drobnjak of Croatia; Second Committee, Mr. Dian Triansyah Djani of Indonesia; Third Committee, Ms. María Emma Mejía Vélez of Colombia; and Sixth Committee, Mr. Danny Danon of Israel.

I congratulate the Chairpersons of the five Main Committees at the seventy-first session of the General Assembly on their election. The Assembly will be informed after the election of the Chairperson of the Fifth Committee at a later date, and the General Committee of the General Assembly for the seventy-first session will then be fully constituted in accordance with rule 38 of the rules of procedure.

Agenda item 7 (*continued*)

Organization of work, adoption of the agenda and allocation of items

The President: I shall now invite the attention of the General Assembly to draft resolution A/70/L.53, circulated under agenda item 20 and entitled "Sustainable development".

Members will recall that at its 2nd plenary meeting, on 18 September 2015, the General Assembly decided to allocate agenda item 20 to the Second Committee. To enable the General Assembly to take action expeditiously on the document, may I take it that the Assembly wishes to consider agenda item 20 directly in plenary meeting and proceed immediately to its consideration?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 20 (*continued*)

Sustainable development

Draft resolution (A/70/L.53)

The President: The General Assembly will now take action on draft resolution A/70/L.53, entitled "International Day of the Tropics".

I now give the floor to the representative of Australia to introduce draft resolution A/70/L.53.

Ms. Bird (Australia): I would first like to thank all member States for their active engagement on resolution A/70/L.53 and address special thanks to the sponsors.

The idea that we can understand some challenges and opportunities if we consider them through a tropics lens is one that resonates strongly for Australia. The tropics are home to 40 per cent of the world's population and host about 80 per cent of its terrestrial biodiversity. Approximately 40 per cent of Australia is in the tropics.

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Our tropical region includes some of our most beautiful landscapes, enjoys unique biodiversity and is rich in indigenous culture and heritage.

This region, like many tropical regions, attracts tourism, yields innovation in agriculture and aquaculture, and is home to other growth sectors. We also share challenges familiar to others living in tropical habitats around the globe: infrastructure demands and service delivery in the face of extreme climatic conditions; tropical health threats; and the complexity of managing resources and protecting fragile ecosystems.

However, where there are challenges we also see opportunities. We are excited by the potential to learn and collaborate with others in tropical countries and regions to find ways for the tropics to prosper.

Much of the activity and investment in support of the Sustainable Development Goals will take place in the tropics, particularly in the areas of poverty eradication, health, education, urbanization and the health of our oceans. This means that success in the tropics is a significant contribution to our global success.

Designating 29 June as International Day of the Tropics will allow us to lift the profile of the tropics around the globe. It will prompt us to consider global data from a tropical perspective to ask the question: is life in the tropics improving?

Deepening our understanding of the data tells us that there is a bigger story for the tropics. The State of the Tropics Project, supported by a network of academic institutions from across the globe coordinated by Australia's James Cook University, is a prime example of how much we can learn when we view the data we already have through a tropics lens.

An International Day of the Tropics will help crystallize the fact that tropical challenges need tropical solutions. In finding these solutions, we might also find innovations and contributions that are globally relevant. We look forward to working with all to celebrate the first International Day of the Tropics on 29 June.

The President: We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/70/L.53.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/70/L.53, entitled "International Day of the Tropics".

I now give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Botnaru (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that since the submission of draft resolution A/70/L.53, and in addition to those delegations listed in the document, the following countries have also become sponsors of the draft resolution: Argentina, Belize, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Cameroon, Cyprus, Greece, Guyana, Haiti, Maldives, Micronesia, Montenegro, Panama, San Marino, Senegal, Serbia, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

The President: May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt draft resolution A/70/L.53?

Draft resolution A/70/L.53 was adopted (resolution 70/267).

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 20.

Agenda item 56 (*continued*)

Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects

Report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) (A/70/498/Add.1)

The President: If there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, I shall take it that the General Assembly decides not to discuss the report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) which is before the Assembly today.

It was so decided.

The President: Statements will therefore be limited to explanations of vote. The positions of delegations regarding the recommendations of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) have been made clear in the Committee and are reflected in the relevant official records. May I remind members that under paragraph 7 of decision 34/401, the General Assembly agreed that

> "When the same draft resolution is considered in a Main Committee and in plenary meeting, a delegation should, as far as possible, explain its vote only once,

that is, either in the Committee or in plenary meeting, unless that delegation's vote in plenary meeting is different from its vote in the Committee".

May I remind delegations that, also in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Before we begin to take action on the recommendation contained in the report of the special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee), I should like to advise representatives that we are going to proceed to take decisions in the same manner as was done in the Committee, unless notified otherwise in advance.

The Assembly will now consider the report (A/70/498/Add.1) of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) on agenda item 56, entitled "Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects".

The General Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) in paragraph 6 of that report.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 70/268).

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 56.

Agenda item 112 (*continued*)

Elections to fill vacancies in principal organs

(b) Election of eighteen members of the Economic and Social Council

The President: The General Assembly will now proceed to the election of eighteen members of the Economic and Social Council to replace those members whose term of office expires on 31 December 2016.

The eighteen outgoing members are: Antigua and Barbuda, Bangladesh, Botswana, China, the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Finland, Georgia, Guatemala, Kazakhstan, Panama, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, Serbia, Sweden, Switzerland, Togo and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Pursuant to rule 146 of the rules of procedure, these countries are eligible for immediate re-election.

As of 1 January 2017, the following States will be represented on the Economic and Social Council: Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Chile, the Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guyana, Honduras, India, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Lebanon, Mauritania, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Portugal, the Republic of Moldova, Rwanda, Somalia, South Africa, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, the United States of America, Viet Nam and Zimbabwe. The names of these thirty-six States should therefore not appear on the ballots.

In accordance with paragraph 4 of resolution 2847 (XXVI), of 20 December 1971, and taking into account the number of States that will remain members of the Council after 1 January 2017, the eighteen members should be elected as follows: four from African States, four from Asia-Pacific States, three from Eastern European States, three from Latin American and Caribbean States and four from Western European and other States. The ballot papers reflect that pattern.

I should like to inform the Assembly that those candidates, their number not exceeding the number of seats to be filled, who receive a two-thirds majority and the greatest number of votes by members present and voting will be declared elected.

Also, consistent with past practice, in case, due to a tied vote, it becomes necessary to determine the candidate to be elected or that will proceed to the next round of restricted balloting, there will be a special restricted ballot limited to those candidates that have obtained an equal number of votes. May I take it that the General Assembly agrees to these procedures?

It was so decided.

The President: In accordance with rule 92 of the rules of procedure, the election shall be held by secret ballot, and there shall be no nominations.

Regarding candidatures for the respective regional groups, the Secretariat has been informed that for the four vacant seats from among the African States, the

Group has endorsed four candidates: Benin, Cameroon, Chad and Swaziland. For the four vacant seats from among the Asia-Pacific States, the Group has endorsed four candidates: China, the Republic of Korea, Tajikistan and the United Arab Emirates. For the three vacant seats from among the Eastern European States, the Group has endorsed three candidates: Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Russian Federation.

For the three vacant seats from among the Latin American and Caribbean States, the Group has endorsed three candidates: Colombia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. For the four vacant seats from among the Western European and other States, the Group has endorsed four candidates: Andorra, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

In accordance with rule 92 of the rules of procedure, we shall now proceed to the election by secret ballot.

Before we begin the voting process, I should like to remind members that pursuant to rule 88 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, no representative shall interrupt the voting except on a point of order on the actual conduct of the voting. In addition, ballot papers will be given only to the representative seated directly behind the country's nameplate.

I should like to seek the usual cooperation of representatives during the time of the conduct of the election. Please be reminded that during the voting process, all campaigning should cease in the General Assembly Hall. This means in particular that once the meeting has begun, no more campaign material can be distributed inside the Hall.

All representatives are also requested to remain at their seats so that the voting process can proceed in an orderly manner. I thank them for their cooperation.

We shall now begin the voting process.

Ballot papers marked "A", "B", "C", "D" and "E" will now be distributed. I request representatives to use only those ballot papers and to write on them the names of the States for which they wish to vote. A ballot will be declared invalid if it contains more names of Member States from the relevant region than the number of seats assigned to it. A ballot will also be declared invalid if none of the names of the Member States on that ballot belong to the relevant region.

If a ballot paper of a region contains both the names of the Member States that belong to and that are outside of that region, the ballot remains valid, but only the names of the Member States that belong to the relevant region will be counted. The names of Member States that do not belong to that region will not be counted.

At the invitation of the President, Ms. Wanner (Austria), Mrs. Vassil (El Salvador), Mrs. Le Diffard (Hungary), Mr. Khoo (Singapore), Mr. Davidson (South Africa) and Mr. Wickramarachchige (Sri Lanka) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

The meeting was suspended at 3.40 p.m. and resumed at 4.55 p.m.

The President: The result of the voting is as follows:

Group A – Group of African States (4 seats)	
Number of ballot papers:	185
Number of invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	185
Abstentions:	2
Number of members voting:	183
Required two-thirds majority:	122
Number of votes obtained:	
Cameroon	183
Chad	175
Swaziland	173
Benin	163
Senegal	1
Congo	1
Botswana	1
Togo	1

Group B – Asia-Pacific States (4 seats)	
Number of ballot papers:	185
Number of invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	185
Abstentions:	0
Number of members voting:	185
Required two-thirds majority:	124
Number of votes obtained:	
Tajikistan	183
China	182
United Arab Emirates	180
Republic of Korea	179
Cambodia	3
Yemen	1

Group C – Eastern European States (3 seats)

Number of ballot papers:	185
Number of invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	185
Abstentions:	1
Number of members voting:	184
Required two-thirds majority:	123
Number of votes obtained:	
Azerbaijan	176
Bosnia and Herzegovina	173
Russian Federation	169
Romania	10
Croatia	1
Belarus	1

Group D – Latin American and Caribbean States (3 seats)

Number of ballot papers:	185
Number of invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	185
Abstentions:	2
Number of members voting:	183
Required two-thirds majority:	122
Number of votes obtained:	
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	179
Colombia	178
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	177

Group B – Western European and other States (1 seat)

Number of ballot papers:	185
Number of invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	185
Abstentions:	7
Number of members voting:	178
Required two-thirds majority:	119
Number of votes obtained:	
Norway	177
Sweden	176
Andorra	174
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	172
Finland	1
Switzerland	1

Having obtained the required two-thirds majority of members present and voting, the following 18 States were elected members of the Economic and Social Council for a three-year term beginning on 1 January 2017: Andorra, Azerbaijan, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cameroon, Chad, China, Colombia, Norway, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Swaziland, Sweden, Tajikistan, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

The President: I congratulate those States which have been elected members of the Economic and Social Council, and I thank the tellers for their assistance in this election.

This concludes this stage of our consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 112.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.